



MUZAFFARNAGAR: Two labourers were killed and 17 injured as the roof of an under-construction house collapsed in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar, police said on Monday. The incident took place in

Talda village on Sunday, when the labourers were working at the site. While two labourers were declared dead, 17 were admitted to a hospital where the condition of one of them is stated to be critical.

'Ram Rajya' has started in India: Rajnath

PTI / KATHUA (J&K)

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday said the "Ram Rajya" has started taking roots in the country and nobody can stop it in becoming a reality. At a rally in support of Union minister Jitendra Singh at Basohli in Kathua, he highlighted the fulfillment of all promises made by the BJP like abrogation of Article 370, construction of the Ram temple and implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act.

He said BJP is not doing politics for formation of the government but for the country which was pulled out from a big trouble caused by the trust deficit between the people and politicians. Rajnath said nobody who is an Indian national will lose citizenship after the implementation of CAA, while BJP will keep its promise to implement the UCC.

NO SC RELIEF FOR KEJRIWAL

GAURAV VIVEK BHATNAGAR NEW DELHI

Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday did not get any relief from the Supreme Court on his petition against his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate in the Delhi liquor policy case. The apex court directed the ED to file a reply by April 24 and listed the matter for the week beginning April 29.

Kejriwal had sought early listing of his petition but the court did not grant him that. The matter was listed before the Bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta. Appearing for Kejriwal, his counsel, Abhishek Manu Singh, submitted that he had demanded an early hearing in the case. He tried to reason the same by saying that he had "some facts" to show and that these would "shock the conscience of the court". Singhvi also maintained that there had been "some selec-



ED and Centre, the Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta objected to the grant of an early hearing and the arguments forwarded by Singhvi.

On hearing both sides, the Bench issued the order that the hearing will take place in the week starting from April 29. It also said the respondent will file its reply on or before April 26. Stating that this was the shortest possible date it could provide, the Bench also asked Singhvi to "reserve the arguments" for the next date.

Incidentally, Singhvi had moved the Supreme Court against the April 9 order of the Delhi High Court which had rejected Kejriwal's appeal against his arrest saying the ED had placed enough material on record to show his involvement in the case. The agency had claimed that he was the key conspirator and kingpin of the scam.

ECIR) or the eight chargesheets filed by the ED and the CBI thus far.

Apart from this Singhvi also questioned the timing of Kejriwal's arrest saying, "the story began in September 2022 and he was arrested on March 21, 2024." Singhvi said in this period there were 16 statements of which 10 were by one person, Sarath Reddy, the director of Aurobindo Pharma. The remaining six statements were by others. The senior advocate said while "15 statements" had not mentioned Kejriwal, only "one statement becomes positive." And he said this was used to arrest his client that too after the announcement of the model code of conduct for the Lok Sabha elections.

The idea, Singhvi said, was to "disable me (Kejriwal) from campaigning". He then pointed out that the voting for the first phase of Lok Sabha elections is to take place on April 19. Appearing for the

SC pat for Rly's Kavach

PTI / NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday appreciated the steps taken by the Indian Railways to prevent train accidents, including the automatic train protection system 'Kavach', to avoid collisions.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and K V Viswanathan disposed of a petition that raised several issues related to passenger safety after taking note of multiple steps taken by the public sector behemoth to prevent accidents and promote safe travel. "We appreciate the steps taken by the Railways," the bench said, taking note of the status report filed by Attorney General R Venkataramani.

Hearing the plea by Vishal Tiwari on Jan 2, SC sought to know about the protective steps implemented so far or proposed to be taken by the Centre, including the 'Kavach' system.

IN THE COURTYARD

Notice to CBI on Kavitha's bail plea

NEW DELHI: A city court on Monday issued notice to the CBI on BRS leader K Kavitha's bail application in a corruption case linked to the alleged Delhi excise scam.

Special judge for CBI and ED cases Kaveri Baweja, who sent Kavitha to judicial custody till April 23, directed the federal agency to file its reply to the application by April 22.

The CBI had arrested the Telangana MLC and daughter of former chief minister K Chandrababhan Rao from Tihar Jail, where she was lodged after her arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money laundering case stemming from the alleged scam. The CBI is probing alleged corruption in the formulation



and execution of the AAP government's excise policy, while the ED is investigating the money laundering aspect. In her bail application in the corruption case, Kavitha said she was a 'star campaigner' for her party in the general elections. She sought an interim bail while her regular bail application was pending. **GAURAV VIVEK BHATNAGAR**

Ex-VCs, profs form panel to resolve univ's chaos

PTI / KOLKATA

A group of former vice-chancellors and senior professors from West Bengal's state-run universities has announced the formation of a citizens' committee aimed at resolving the ongoing issues in university functioning.

Former VC of North Bengal University Omprakash Mishra said the committee, comprising renowned academics and legal experts, will address issues such as the roles of the governor and chancellor, confusion and overlaps in their powers, and compliance with constitutional and regulatory frame-

works. Members include former UGC chairman Sukhdeo Thorat, SC advocate Jose P. Verghese, Sudhansu Bhushan from NUEPA, and Sibaji Pratim Basu from Vidyasagar University, he said.

The panel plans to engage with stakeholders, including students, faculty, alumni, and government officials, to compile a comprehensive white paper. "This committee, having nationally known experts in their respective fields, will meet all stakeholders, students, teachers and non-teaching staff of the institutes, distinguished alumnus, teacher bodiesty to prepare a white paper," Mishra said.

Snake on train

SHANKAR RAJ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Cockroaches and rats in trains are common, but in an unusual incident, a passenger was allegedly bitten by a snake on Madurai-Guruvayur Passenger Express on Monday morning.

Initially, the Railways said it was not a snake, but a rat bit Karthik from Madurai. But his co-passengers saw a snake slithering away after biting the passenger.

Karthik alighted at Ettumanoor in south Kerala and went to Medical College Hospital. "He is not serious. His condition is stable," a police officer said.

The train was stopped for 10 minutes at Ettumanoor.

RTI: No provision to keep records under CAA rules

PTI / KOLKATA

There is no provision under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 and its rules, notified on March 11, to maintain records of citizenship applications filed online under the law, according to an RTI reply by the Union Home Ministry.

The ministry's response came to RTI applications filed by Bangla Pokkho, an organisation that claims to work for the rights of Bengalis, seeking information on the number of people who applied for citizenship through the website provided by the Home Ministry on March 12 and 13,

the two days following the notification of the CAA rules.

The Union Home Ministry in a communication (F No 26027/94/2024-IC-I, dated April 15, 2024) stated, "that the records are not being maintained as desired by you because the Citizenship Act, 1955 & Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 and the rules made thereunder does not have the provision to maintain the records of Citizenship application received. Further, as per the RTI Act, 2005, CPIO is not authorised to create information. Hence the information sought may be treated as NIL," said the communication.

ED arrests 3 Shahjahan aides

KOLKATA: Three associates of former Trinamool Congress strongman leader Shahjahan Sheikh were taken into custody by the ED, the agency said on Monday.

The ED took them into custody on April 12 after the Calcutta High Court granted 10 days of custody to the law enforcement agency.

"ED, Kolkata, has taken Shih Prasad Hazra, Sekh Alomgir and Didar Boksh Molla (all associates of Shahjahan Sheikh) into its custody on 12/04/2024 following the order of Hon'ble PMLA Court granting 10-day custody. Earlier, it obtained ED custody of Shahjahan Sheikh for 13 days," the ED said.

Stay on Idgah mosque survey extended

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday extended the stay on the operation of the Allahabad High Court order that allowed a court-monitored survey of the Shahi Idgah mosque complex adjoining the Krishna Janmabhoomi temple in Mathura. A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta, meanwhile, posted for hearing in the week commencing August 5 a batch of petitions filed by the mosque management committee including the one challenging the May 26, 2023 order of the high court transferring to itself all matters related to the dispute pending before a Mathura court.

MP defends Lokayukta appointment

NEW DELHI: The Madhya Pradesh government has defended in the Supreme Court the appointment of the Lokayukta and accused the Leader of the Opposition of making "false and baseless" allegations about not being consulted in the matter for political mileage. It asserted the LoP was duly consulted but he chose not to give any opinion on the name recommended by the chief justice of the state high court for appointment as the anti-corruption ombudsman.

No anticipatory bail for Amanatullah

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan's anticipatory bail application in a money laundering case related to alleged irregularities in the Delhi Waqf Board during his chairmanship and ordered him to join the investigation. A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta asked Khan to appear before the ED on April 18 at 11 am. **GAURAV VIVEK BHATNAGAR**

Prabir's medical bail plea adjourned

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday adjourned the medical bail plea of Prabir Purkayastha, NewsClick founder and Editor-in-Chief, lodged in Tihar jail under anti-terror law, for April 22.

FROM FRONT PAGE

Fatal triple-seat ride...

Mahim traffic police were alerted about the accident between 11 and 11.30pm on Sunday. On reaching the spot, they found a mangled bike near a private bus, with Patil lying in a pool of blood nearby. Dhame and Vikas Sonawane were found in two different directions on the almost-empty road. The trio was going towards Dadar on the southbound side of Senapati Bapat

Marg. Sonawane remains unconscious and critical. "Till he is stable enough to talk, we cannot say much about where they were travelling or why they were travelling so late. Details about the deceased will be known after the victim starts talking and is able to give his statement," the officer said.

Police suspect Patil was inebriated. It could be the reason he failed to spot the speed bump while driving, and all were without helmets. Patil was also found to have been driving without a licence as

none was found on his person. CCTV footage of the spot shows Patil speeding and missing the speedbreaker, police said. The post-mortem report from KEM hospital is awaited and it will indicate if or not Patil was driving under the influence. An FIR will be lodged against Patil for driving without a helmet, without a licence, speeding, driving triple seat, causing death due to negligence, rash driving and dangerous driving under relevant IPC and the Motor Vehicles Act sections.

Aircraft lands with...

"At 5.30 pm (after a lapse of 75 minutes since the Holding fuel announcement), the pilot announced he'll finally attempt landing at Chandigarh. By then, several passengers and one of the crew staff started puking out of panic," he stated.

"Finally, the plane managed to land at 6.10 pm at Chandigarh Airport after a lapse of 115 minutes since the 45 minutes Holding fuel announcement. What an ordeal it was for the passengers. DGCA and MoCA kindly

enquire if all SOPs were followed or was it the narrowest escape?" he wrote.

The DGCA is yet to respond.

Iran to give India...

The Iranian foreign minister urged India to maintain its active role through international bodies, including the UNSC, to halt the war in Gaza as it is at the core of the current crisis in the region, the readout said. In the talks, Jaishankar called for the release of Indians onboard Portuguese-flagged cargo vessel MSC Aries.

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AUCTION NOTICE							
Branch	Account No.	Acct Holder name	Father's/ Spouse Name	Address	Ac opening Date	Payoff	
MAJIWADA THANE	103042514469	SAHIB DHIR	S/O BAL KAMAL DHIR	FLAT NO C 13 14 ALPHA APARTMENTS, SECTOR 28, VASHI PLOT NO 26 27, NAVI MUMBAI, THANE MAHARASHTRA 400703	11-12-2023	151,198.26	
MAJIWADA THANE	103042514424	UMA V PAL	C/O SHAMBHUNATH	HOUSE NO 53 17 SAIBABA NAGAR MISHRA CHAWL APARTMENT BEHIND TEACHER COLONY MUMBAI SUBURBAN MAHARASHTRA 400051	07-12-2023	157,915.36	
PUNE TILAK ROAD	103042512645	AJAY S KASBE	S/O SHANKAR KASBE	HOUSE NO 72 1A 3 SAI DHARMAVANT APART A WING FLAT 13 PIMPLE GURAV PUNE CITY PUNE MAHARASHTRA 411027	20-06-2023	1,135,255.22	
MAJIWADA THANE	103042514498	VARSHA V SAWANT W/O VIJAY VITHAL SAWANT	C/O MANOHAR	BLDG 6, 303 3RD FLOOR DEVDAYA NAGAR CHS PHASE 1 POKHRAN ROAD NO 1 OPP RAVI ESTATE DEVDAYA NAGAR THANE MAHARASHTRA 400606	14-12-2023	1,868,842.97	
MAJIWADA THANE	103042514428	VARSHA V SAWANT W/O VIJAY VITHAL SAWANT	C/O MANOHAR	BLDG 6, 303 3RD FLOOR DEVDAYA NAGAR CHS PHASE 1 POKHRAN ROAD NO 1 OPP RAVI ESTATE DEVDAYA NAGAR THANE MAHARASHTRA 400606	07-12-2023	191,766.62	
MAJIWADA THANE	103042513093	NITIN V BUTIYA	C/O VASANT BUTIYA	C 2011 FLOOR 20TH 89 NEWJAIWALWADI CHS PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALVIYA MARG MUMBAI MAHARASHTRA 400034	07-08-2023	55,880.73	
MAJIWADA THANE	103042513339	GOPAL B MIREKAR	C/O BABU	TOPIWALA CHAWL DATTAPADA ROAD, OPP POLICE STATION, RAJENDRA NAGAR, BORIVALI EAST MUMBAI SUBURBAN MAHARASHTRA 400066	06-09-2023	30,256.82	
MAJIWADA THANE	103042513680	ZUBEDA N SHAIKH	C/O ABDUL KARIM SHAIKH	ROOM NO 62 NEW COLLECTOR COMPOUND PLOTNO 29 ABDUL HAMEED ROAD GATE NO 7 OPP MOHAMMADIYA MASJID MALWANI MALAD WEST MUMBAI SUBURBAN MAHARASHTRA 400095	10-10-2023	37,551.62	
MAJIWADA THANE	103042514006	ANISHA RALLI	D/O RAKESH RALLI	FLAT NO 16 6TH FLOOR GALAXY SUBURBAN BAND STAND BANDRA WEST BANDRA MUMBAI SUBURBAN MAHARASHTRA 400050	06-11-2023	79,640.70	
MAJIWADA THANE	103742510305	ANISHA RALLI	D/O RAKESH RALLI	FLAT NO 16 6TH FLOOR GALAXY SUBURBAN BAND STAND BANDRA WEST BANDRA MUMBAI SUBURBAN MAHARASHTRA 400050	01-02-2024	83,396.72	
PUNE TILAK ROAD	103042514128	AVDHOOT B KALE	S/O BALASAHEB KALE	PLOT NO 13 CHARCH ROAD OPP SHIVANJALI LAWN BHUSHAN NAGAR KEDGAON AHMEDNAGAR MAHARASHTRA 414001	16-11-2023	58139.0735	
PUNE TILAK ROAD	104242510287	AVDHOOT B KALE	S/O BALASAHEB KALE	PLOT NO 13 CHARCH ROAD OPP SHIVANJALI LAWN BHUSHAN NAGAR KEDGAON AHMEDNAGAR MAHARASHTRA 414001	17-02-2024	63194.2913	
PUNE TILAK ROAD	103042514274	MANGESH S PAWAR	C/O SURESH	HOUSE NO 63 9 KEDARI NAGR YASHVANTI NIVAS WANWADI PUNE CITY PUNE MAHARASHTRA 411040	27-11-2023	186906.24	
PUNE TILAK ROAD	104242510340	MANGESH S PAWAR	C/O SURESH	HOUSE NO 63 9 KEDARI NAGR YASHVANTI NIVAS WANWADI PUNE CITY PUNE MAHARASHTRA 411040	29-02-2024	104286.71	
MAJIWADA THANE	103042514430	RAHUL R RAUT	C/O RAMBHAU	PLOT NO.19 BORLE NAGAR YAVATMAL YAVATMAL YAVATMAL MAHARASHTRA 445001	08-12-2023	89576.1137	
MAJIWADA THANE	103042514448	RAHUL R RAUT	C/O RAMBHAU	PLOT NO.19 BORLE NAGAR YAVATMAL YAVATMAL YAVATMAL MAHARASHTRA 445001	09-12-2023	53673.94	
MAJIWADA THANE	103042514505	FAROOUQ D SHAFIQUE	C/O SHAFIQUE AYYUB FAROOUQ	ROOM NO B 102 TANWAR BAUG HASRAT MOHANI ROAD THANEKADAR PALACE KAUSA MUMBAI MAHARASHTRA MH 400612	15-12-2023	136963.4206	
MAJIWADA THANE	104242510020	YOGESH S PAWAR	S/O SANJAY PAWAR	39, BHAVANI PETH SHANKAR SHETH ROAD NEAR SONAWANE HOSPITAL PUNE CITY BHAVANI PETH PUNE MH 411042	16-12-2023	57536.4843	

Auction date is 29.04.2024 @ 03:00 pm. The Bank reserves the right to delete any account from the auction or cancel the auction without any prior notice. Authorised Officer, Shivalik Small Finance Bank Ltd.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

All will regret it: PM

The PM's comments come in the backdrop of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's arrest last month in connection with the alleged liquor policy scam.

LEVEL-PLAYING FIELD: The Prime Minister also denied allegations that the new law allows the government to have its handpicked poll panel officials. He told ANI, "In fact, we have made several improvements. Today, when the Election Commission is constituted, the opposition also plays a role in it." He was referring to the law mandating the Leader of the Opposition as the third member of the selection panel. The other two are the PM and a Union Minister.

Asked about possible investment in India by Tesla, Inc. boss Elon Musk, the PM said he welcomed all such initiatives but pitched for localisation, saying "the product should have the essence of our soil".

KISSI KO DARNE KI ZAROORAT NAHIN HAI: In the exhaustive interview, the PM also fended off questions on "Modi ki guarantee", One-Nation Election, his 100-day blueprint and the long-term roadmap for 2047, when India turns 100. "I have big plans...kissi ko darne ki zaroorat nahin hai (no one needs to fear it). My decisions are not made to scare anyone or to diminish anyone. They are for the overall development of the country," PM Modi said, when asked about his "Abhi toh trailer hai" comment on the last decade of the NDA government.

Air turbulence for Rahul, now

Addressing the media, party spokesperson Jairam Ramesh said Congress leaders are being targeted by central agencies. "The day before yesterday, my car was checked, my shaving cream was taken out, my toothpaste was taken out, my entire suitcase was taken out. I remained silent, I said, whatever has to be done, do it. ...check the Prime Minister's chopper, my toothpaste was taken out, my entire suitcase was taken out, my toothpaste was taken out, my entire suitcase was taken out, level the playing field (should be there)," he said.

"You are an impartial institution, a constitutional institution, understand your rights and treat all parties equally. Don't give special category status to the Prime Minister. Don't give special category status to the Home Minister. If you want to check the vehicles, do it, if you want to check the chopper, do it, we have no objection," he said.

Meanwhile, in New Delhi, Election Commission sources clarified to the PTI that surveillance and inspection of non-scheduled aircraft and helicopters by the agencies during poll season is part of standing instructions.

Judicial autonomy is at stake...

This behaviour, we observe, is particularly pronounced in the cases and causes of social, economic and political significance, including the cases involving certain individuals, wherein the lines between advocacy and manoeuvring are blurred to the detriment of judicial independence," says the letter.

Without naming the people or the group engaged in the alleged misinformation, the letter reads, "We are particularly concerned about the tactics of misinformation and the orchestration of public sentiment against the judiciary, which are not only unethical but also detrimental to the foundational

principles of our democracy. The practice of selectively praising judicial decisions that align with one's views while vehemently criticizing those that do not, undermines the very essence of judicial review and the rule of law."

Urging the Supreme Court to fortify against such pressures and ensure that the sanctity and autonomy of our legal system are preserved, the retired judges in the letter to Chief Justice Chandrachud have expressed the hope that they will depend on his "resolute guidance and leadership in these challenging times."

Orchestrated campaign: The Congress alleged that the letter by 21 judges to the Chief Justice of India was part of an "orchestrated campaign of the prime minister" to "threaten, browbeat and intimidate" the judiciary that has flexed its muscles in recent months. Asked about the letter at a press conference at the AICC headquarters here, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh alleged that the "greatest threat" to judicial independence comes from the BJP.

"Please see the fourth name on that list and it will give away the whole objective, background and authority of the letter," he said in an apparent reference to former Supreme Court Judge M R Shah.

"So this letter of the 21 Modi-friendly former judges has to be seen along with that letter of 600 Modi-friendly lawyers. This is all an attempt to intimidate, frighten and browbeat an independent judiciary," Ramesh alleged.

HC upholds right to sleep

His plea mentioned that he had appeared before the agency every time he was issued summons.

He has claimed in his plea that he had appeared before the ED on August 7, 2023, following summons and that he was questioned throughout the night and was arrested in the case the next day.

Although the bench dismissed Issrani's petition, it disapproved of him having been questioned through the night.

The probe agency's counsel Hiten Venegaonkar, however, told the bench that Issrani had consented to his statement being recorded through the night.

"Voluntary or otherwise, we deprecate the manner in which the petitioner's statement was recorded so late in the night, which went on post midnight, till 3.30am," the bench emphasised. "The 'right to sleep'/'right to blink' is a basic human requirement, in as much as, non-provision of the same, violates a person's human rights."

It added that lack of sleep affects a person's health, may impair their mental faculties, cognitive skills and so on. When a person is summoned for questioning, the investigating agency is yet to arrive at a 'reason to believe' that the said person is guilty of an offence.

A diplomatic Apsara...

She is credited with writing a collection of short stories The White Sari and The Adventures of Young Ambedkar, a children's book. The book reimagines young Ambedkar's life.

But Devyani has been in the news for all the wrong reasons. The authors coming out of the Ministry of External Affairs and dabbling in fiction are few and far between.

Among them: Navtej Sarma, Vikas Swarup, N Parthasarathy, Rajiv Dogra, T S Tirumurti and Nina Sibal; the poets are ever fewer (Kanwal Sibal, Nirupama Menon Rao and Amarendra Khatua); and the children's writers are too few to mention. Other than Devyani there is Mitra Vashist.

Heat stirs up city dust bowl

On Sunday, the day temperatures in the suburbs had soared to 33.2 °C, with a maximum temperature of 32 °C being recorded at the Colaba observatory, while a minimum temperature of 25.6 °C was recorded at the Santacruz station.

Meteorologists anticipate above-normal temperatures to rise by at least one or two degrees Celsius throughout Maharashtra this summer.

Thane, Raigad, and several other districts too are hot under the collar, with temperatures well above the comfort zone. The IMD warning is cue for the public to take the necessary precautions to combat the inclement weather.

Malegaon recorded the highest maximum temperature of 42.6°C, making it the hottest location in the state. Jejur and Jalgaon followed closely, with temperatures peaking at 41.5 °C each. In the Thane-Belapur Industries Association (TBIA) area, there were sweltering conditions, with the temperature reaching 41.0 °C. In Ahmednagar, Satara and Nasik, the mercury touched 40 °C.

Ratnagiri and Alibag experienced relatively lower but still significantly high temperatures.

The civic administration in Mumbai has already issued guidelines for people to cope with the heatwave, emphasising the importance of staying hydrated, avoiding direct exposure to sunlight in peak hours, and seeking medical assistance in case of heat-related illnesses. Residents have been advised to stay indoors as much as possible and take adequate measures to beat the heat. Relief measures for vulnerable sections of the population, such as the elderly, children and the homeless individuals have been put in place in view of the extreme weather.

But expect above...

The IMD chief said there is a 29 percent chance of normal rainfall, 31 percent chance of above-normal rainfall and 30 percent chance of excess precipitation during the monsoon season.

According to the IMD, rainfall between 96 per cent and 104 percent of a 50-year average of 87 cm is considered 'normal'.

Rainfall less than 90 percent of the long-period average is considered 'deficient', between 90 percent and 95 percent is 'below normal', between 105 percent and 110 percent is 'above normal' and more than 100 percent is 'excess' precipitation. Data from the 1951-2023 period shows India experienced above-normal rainfall in the monsoon season on all the nine occasions when La Nina followed an El Nino event, Mohapatra said. The country gauged above-normal or normal monsoon in 20 out of the 22 La Nina years.

El Nino conditions are prevailing at present. ENSO neutral conditions are expected in the first half of the monsoon season. Thereafter, models suggest, La Nina conditions may set in by August-September, Mohapatra said.

Positive Indian Ocean Dipole conditions, favorable for the Indian monsoon, are predicted during the season. Also, the snow cover in the Northern Hemisphere and Eurasia is low. Therefore, all the conditions are conducive, he said.

El Nino conditions -- periodic warming of surface waters in the central Pacific Ocean -- are associated with weaker monsoon winds and drier conditions in India. La Nina conditions - the antithesis of El Nino -- are the dominant factor in the likelihood of "above-normal" rainfall during the monsoon season, D S Pai, a senior scientist at the IMD, said.